

HOLYOKE TRANSCRIPT-TELEGRAM (MA)

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Plugging some leaks

If this wasn't so serious, it would be humorous.

The Reagan Administration is considering the criminal prosecution of five news organizations for publishing information about U.S. intelligence-gathering operations, particularly intercepted communications reflecting U.S. code-breaking capabilities.

A The culprits, according to Central Intelligence Agency Director William J. Casey, are The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Washington Times, and two news magazines, Newsweek and Time.

If Casey follows through on his threat, it will be a first against a U.S. news organization.

Casey is in this great frenzy because he believes the press is printing all of this super-secret data and thus aiding and abetting our enemies.

Apparently Casey is living under the false assumption that our enemies would not be capable of obtaining this secret information, without reading it in the Times or Post. Incredible.

If the information can be discovered by reporters, isn't it terribly logical to believe that paid, highly-skilled and trained spies could obtain the same information even quicker and easier.

Most of the Casey harangue can be attributed to the Reagan Administration's inability to stop information leaks from the White House and State Department. Dozens of threats have been issued, but the leaks continue. Apparently some people on the inside believe it's important that information be shared with those on the outside.

There could be a long philosophical discussion on the pros and cons of government employees leaking information, but suffice it to say, Reagan, Casey and their associates aren't going to solve their problem by threatening the media.

The press' job is to report the news and in this country, at least, that news will be reported regardless who William J. Casey threatens.

Americans should worry more about what the media doesn't print than what it does print.